

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 and 37-42 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, 7, 9-16, 37 and 39-42 are amended. Claims 17-36 and 43-50 are canceled. No new matter is added.

Reconsideration based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Lett and Poon in the January 12, 2007 personal interview and follow-up telephone interview on January 22. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 4-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent. No. 6,940,615 to Shima; rejects claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Shima in view of U.S. Patent No. No. 6,145,031 to Mastie et al. (Mastie); and rejects claims 37-42 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Shima in view of Japanese Publication No. JP 2000 132354 A to Sakaguchi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 recites and amended claim 37 similarly recites, *inter alia*, "inputting and scanning image data with the image input device."

Amended claims 4, 7, 9-16 and 42 recite and amended claim 41 similarly recites, *inter alia*, "an image data input device for inputting and scanning the image data."

Amended claims 39 and 40 recite, *inter alia*, the image input device including "an image data input portion for inputting and scanning the image data."

Support for the amendments can be found in the specification at, for example, page 58, lines 6-8.

Shima teaches a high function printer that examines the performance attributes of downstream low function printers and stores the thus examined performance (Abstract).

Sakaguchi teaches a method of facilitating an operation for processing one printing job with plural printers in parallel (problem to be solved).

Mastie teaches a system for queuing elements, such as print jobs (Abstract).

The passage relied upon by the Office Action as disclosing the recited feature of claims 1, 4, 7, 9-16, 37 and 39-42 merely shows the sending of print jobs to the printer. The applied references, in any combination, fail to teach or suggest inputting and scanning image data. Accordingly, the applied references fail to teach or disclose each and every feature of claims 1, 4, 7, 9-16, 37 and 39-42.

For at least these reasons and as acknowledged during our January 12 personal interview and January 22 follow-up telephone interview, independent claims 1, 4, 7, 9-16, 37 and 39-42, and their dependent claims, are patentable over the applied references. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections of the claims is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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